

## Edmund Pendleton Gaines to Andrew Jackson, November 21, 1817, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

### BRIGADIER-GENERAL EDMUND P. GAINES TO JACKSON.

Fort Scott, November 21, 1817.

*General*, The first Brigade arrived at this place on the 19th instant. I had previously sent an Indian runner to notify the foul-town<sup>1</sup> Chief E,ne,le,maut,ley of my arrival, and, with a view to ascertain whether his hostile temper had abated, requested him to visit me—he replied that he had already sent to the Commanding officer here, all he had to say, and that he would not come.

<sup>1</sup> The attack on Fowltown precipitated Jackson's war on the Seminoles. The Indians of this town were noted for hostility toward the Americans. *Cf.* Col. Benjamin Hawkins to General McIntosh, Nov. 26, 1814, and to Jackson, May 5, 1815; George Periman to Lieut. R. M. Sands, Feb. 24, 1817; and Maj. D. E. Twiggs to Brigadier-General Gaines, Aug. 11, 1817.

He had warned Major Twiggs not to cross, or cut a stick of wood on the East side of Flint river, alleging [that that land] was his, that he was directed by the powers [ *mut.* ] . . . to protect and defend it and should do so. This [ *mut.* ] . . . fered to, and his town having continued to [ *mut.* ] . . . the last war, having participated as the [ *mut.* ] . . . assist in the predatory war carried on for [ *mut.* ] . . . against the Georgia frontier, I yesterday detached 650 men (supposed to be about the strength of the town) under the Command of Major Twiggs, with orders to bring to me the Chief and warriors and in the event of resistance to treat them as Enemies.<sup>2</sup> The detachment arrived at the town early this morning and were instantly fired upon, but without effect. The fire [was] briskly returned by the detachment,

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and the Indians first to fly with the loss of four warriors slain, and as there is reason to believe many more wounded.

2 Gaines's order to Major Twiggs, Nov. 20, 1817, is as follows:

“The hostile character and conduct of the Indians of the fowl Town, settled within our own limits, rendering it absolutely necessary, that they should be removed, you will proceed to the town with the detachment assigned you, and remove them. You will arrest and bring the chiefs and Warriors to this place, but should they oppose you, or attempt to escape, you will in that event treat them as enemies. Your men are to be strictly prohibited, in any event, from firing upon, or otherwise injuring women and children. You will return to this place with your command, as soon as practicable. Should you receive satisfactory information that any considerable number of the neighbouring Indians have joined those of fowl Town, you will in that event, immediately return to this place without making any further attempt to execute the first above written order.”

Major Twiggs reported to General Gaines, Nov. 21, 1817, as follows: “I have with my command a few hours since returned from the hostile fowl Town, situated upon the United States land and distant about sixteen miles, having executed so much of your order of the 20th as was practicable. Having marched all the night of the 20th I reached the town before day-light on the morning of the 21st and posted the troops in order of Battle, intending silently to surround it and without blood-shed bring to you the Chiefs and Warriors, but they fled from the Companies of Major Montgomery and Captain Birch on my right and fired upon my left under Captains Allison and Bee, when they were fired on in return; discovering my superiority of force they fled to a neighbouring swamp; I remained in possession of the town until sunrise and without destroying it or their provisions I marched my command back to Head Quarters, bringing with me only a few head of Horses and Cattle. I had not a man killed or wounded and the Indians but few as they received but one round and fled.”

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It is with deep regret I have to add that a woman was accidentally shot with some warriors in the act of forcing their way through our line formed for the purpose of arresting their flight. The unfortunate woman had a blanket fastened round her (as many of the warriors have) which amidst the smoke in which they were enveloped, rendered it impossible as I am assured by the officers present, to distinguish her from the warriors. Among the articles found in the house [ *mut.* ] . . . . was a British uniform coat (scarlet) [ *mut.* ] . . . . gold Epaulettes, and a certificate si[gned] [ *mut.* ]. Captain of Marines, “Robert White, in [ *mut.* ] . . . . Nichols”, stating that the chief “had a[lways been a true] and faithfull friend to the British [soldiers.] Major Twiggs reports that the officers and the detachment, generally, performed their duty with zeal and propriety.

The reports of friendly Indians concur in est[i]mating the number of hostile warriors including the red sticks and seminolas at more than two thousand, besides the blacks amounting to near four hundred men and increasing by runaways from Georgia. They have been promised, as several Indians inform me, assistance from the British at new Providence—this promise though made by Woodbine, is relied on by most of the seminola Indians. I have not a doubt but they will sue for peace as soon as they find their hopes of british aid to be without foundation.